CHAMBERS'S JOURNAL

OF

POPULAR

LITERATURE, SCIENCE, AND ART

Fifth Series

ESTABLISHED BY WILLIAM AND ROBERT CHAMBERS, 1832

CONDUCTED BY R. CHAMBERS (SECUNDUS)

No. 195.—Vol. IV. SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 24, 1887. Price 1½d.

THE CLERK OF THE WEATHER.

'Give my compliments,' says Swift (1740), 'to the Clerk of the Weather, and tell him we are all shamefully in a puzzle as to what season it can be. Here we are in the month of May, and the cold like Nova Zembla,' &c. Who the Clerk of the Weather may be just at the present time, or whether the same official holds sway as in the days of the great Dean, it would be hard to tell; but of our perplexed and lamentable condition just now there can be no possible doubt.

I am living in a lonely hamlet, at the top of a steep hill some three leagues away from the quiet old city of Winchester. Round about us on all sides stretch miles and miles of green shady woodland, clothing the hillside, and sloping down into the valleys, away across the golden harvest-fields and plain between us and Winton, the shining roofs of which, on a clear day, can be dimly made out on the horizon. On a summer morning at six A.M. no fairer or more picturesque a stretch of country could be found in a long day's march. For beauty and variety of colour it could hardly be matched, even now, after this long and terrible drought. Of the drought, however, which is silently burning us all up—scarcely a drop of rain since the first week in June—we cannot complain. What everybody else has to endure, we must bear without growling, though every pond for miles round us is a cake of dry mud and every brook has perished. We have had blazing summers before 1887, and in spite of many prophets of evil, have come out of them little or none the worse for the scorching. But this present season, ever since March last, in these parts has been like no other known to the oldest inhabitant. The whole affair has been a puzzle and a mystery; full of contradictions, confusion, and mistakes. April showers came in March; the cuckoo got all wrong in his dates; May came in like a lion, and went out like a lamb; for nearly nine weeks after that we had east and north-east winds of Siberian ferocity. If the glass went up almost until it could go no higher, rain was sure to follow. If it fell to 'Change' or 'Rain,' we got whole days of dry and fine weather. Again and again the sun came out without a cloud, and yet it was far colder than when the sky was dark with clouds.

Take one single day (July 20) as a sample of what Jupiter can do in the way of puzzling us poor Hampshire folk—a day of blazing heat; the sky like brass; the air stagnant; not a leaf on the tall silver birch or the quivering poplar stirs for a moment from its unbroken rest. Overhead, masses of cloud are rushing swiftly across the blue heaven, as if before a gale of wind. But, here below, not a breath ruffles the broad expanse of leafy woodland, look where you will, far and wide.

Yesterday, the exact converse amazed us. A furious wind went raging through the trees; clouds of white dust flew before the blast in every broad road or narrow lane; every garden flower-bed was powdered; the roses fell in clusters; the wheat-field bowed her head in despair. Overhead, the sky was full of clouds; but the sharpest pair of eyes that ever looked up would utterly fail to make out the slightest motion in any one of them; and yet, all the time they were moving, and in half an hour the face of heaven would be changed.

Last night, at eight P.M., after a cloudless day of unbroken sunshine, as the sun was going down, in less than ten minutes the whole expanse of western sky became suddenly crowded with broken, twisted masses of murky cloud; fantastic wreaths of smoky vapour, with spaces of sullen light between, pierced through and through with sharp arrows of purple and black. Slowly, by degrees, the arch of heaven grew darker and darker, until it seemed as if a hurricane of wind and rain was about to sweep down over the thirsty fields. Had Dr Cumming been present, we should have heard many things of Gog and Magog, the crack of doom, and the Battle of Armageddon. But nothing, absolutely nothing

came of it, after all. Water-butts, tubs, and tanks all opened their thirsty mouths; but not a drop fell!

This very evening, almost the same pageant again came to pass. After a long day of cloudless, scorching glare, with scarcely a breath of air afloat, at seven P.M. it began to blow suddenly from the north-west fiercer and fiercer to half a gale of wind. In a few minutes the sky was black as night with masses of heavy brown vapour, all looking as if crammed with rain. This lasted for three hours, when the moon rose in splendour, the stars came out in a cloudless sky, and there was a dead calm, as sultry and oppressive as ever.

This is a great butterfly country, and in the green woodland paths and fields round about us I have in a single season captured more than forty different species, from the Royal Emperor himself down to the tiny Harvest Blue; each and all appearing at their appointed time, within a few days of their known regular date. This year, the order of things has been upset. From the 26th of December 1886 to May 1887, we never fairly got rid of our snow. In March and April, no butterflies appeared. Rarely, now and then, an old battered specimen of the small Tortoiseshell turned up in some sheltered corner of a lane or woodland path; or, still more rarely, a Yellow Sulphur. Not a single specimen of the Meadow-brown (large or small) showed itself, though in ordinary seasons to be counted by hundreds in every hedgerow. Of the lovely White Admiral, which in July usually swarms on the blossom of the bramble, not one was to be seen. Of the Hairstreaks, which I have counted by the score in many a June morning ramble, not one opened its wings to the sun until August, and even then only in twos and threes. Of Red Admirals and Emperors there was, up to August 12, no sign.

Six weeks ago, in every hedgerow there were millions of plants of wood-strawberry and wild raspberry; every woodland path was white with snowy blossom. Not a berry has followed the blossom, not even in a large bed in the vicarage garden. All our bees perished of cold and bitter drought before April, and a strange wild swarm took possession of the desolate hive in July!

The intense heat—seventy degrees in the thickest shade out of doors—still prevails; but there are no wasps; though armies of blue-bottles invade sun and shade, outdoor and in. Moles, which ought to be quietly burrowing under the long grass, are found creeping mournfully among the geraniums, or dead by the dusty roadside. In every meadow, cornfield, and green woodland road there are now clouds of white butterflies that ought to have appeared in April.

The very birds seem demoralised. At the vicarage gate is a rustic pillar-post, which, as we have no post-office, serves for the whole neighbourhood, and is often crammed with letters and newspapers. The box itself is about a foot high, the internal area about a foot square, the aperture about five inches by one. What does a bewildered Tomtit do but persist in building her nest inside it! There she has built *two* nests—one apparently being found too fatally liable to an avalanche of letters—laid seven eggs, and having finally arranged her nursery, hatched, reared, and got out of the box the whole septet of a brood safely into the open air through that one narrow opening; though she might, as any well-behaved Tit would, have chosen from a thousand little nooks of safety in the woodland shade, and there brought up her family in comfort.

But we are all fairly at sixes and sevens down here among the lonely woods, and we appeal to the Clerk of the Weather to set matters to rights with a week or two of quiet rain; otherwise, we shall all be utterly burned up, and incinerated both in mind and body; and autumn will come upon us with a whole army of demoralised squirrels, field-mice, grasshoppers, and distracted dragon-flies, all clamouring to know what season has befallen them! B. G. JOHNS.

WOODMANCOTE, *August* 1887.

RICHARD CABLE,

THE LIGHTSHIPMAN.

CHAPTER XLIII.—A LOW LOT.

WHEN the morning broke, Richard Cable did not dare to kiss the white brows or the rosy cheeks of his sleeping children; but he took little locks of their shining hair between his fingers and put his lips to them, and dropped over each alike a clear tear-drop, and then went away before the seven pairs of bright eyes opened, and the little voices began to chirp and laugh and chatter.

Richard Cable drove his herd of young cattle all the way from St Kerian to Exeter, some fifty miles. There he trucked them on the Bristol and Exeter line, and travelled with them into Somersetshire, where he disposed of them to such advantage that he was well content. But he would not return with only money in his pocket. He had a van constructed, very light, on four wheels, for his cob, and he bought as many calves, a week or ten days old, as he could convey in this van.

He made Bewdley his headquarters, and stayed at the *Otterbourne Arms*, where was the landlady, Mrs Stokes, the sister of the coastguardman at Pentargon. To her he remitted the spar, and the mundic, and the brooch of bog-oak with Cornish crystals in it. She was a tidy, red-cheeked woman, with many children. Among these was a Mary, the eldest, as Cable had been told there would be. He took great delight in talking to and playing with this little girl, and also in listening to the crowing and laughing, and occasional crying, of the rest of the family. They recalled to him sounds very familiar and very dear. He looked long and curiously at the little Stokes' children, and thought how vastly inferior to his own they were in every particular, in manners and in appearance. He did not allow the landlady to see that he drew comparisons between her children and his own—that he considered the blue of his Mary's eyes purer and deeper and truer in colour than that of the irises of her Mary—that there was richer gold and gold more abundant in the hair of his eldest daughter than crowned her first daughter. He had not the coarse pride which would suffer him to do this, and wound the good woman's vanity; but he thought it, nay, he knew it; he was as positive that all superiority in every way lay with his children and his Mary, as

that an English soldier could thrash a dozen Frenchmen.

Cable was a temperate man. He remembered that terrible night when he let little Bessie fall. He never got that experience out of his mind; consequently, he was on his guard against the temptations of a cattle-jobber's life—the sealing of every bargain with a drink. So he drank cold toast-and-water when he could, but he had taken no pledge. 'What's the good of a pledge to me?' he asked himself. 'I've only to think of Bessie's back, and if I had the best spirits in the world before me, I would not touch it.'

'Have you any relatives this way?' asked Mrs Stokes one Saturday evening. 'There's a young woman of your name at the Hall, a lady's-maid to Miss Otterbourne.'

'I have no relatives,' answered Richard, 'but the seven and my mother who are under my roof at St Kerian, in Cornwall.'

''Tis a curious and outlandish sort of a name too,' said Mrs Stokes. 'I mean, it ain't a name one expects to come across twice in a lifetime.'

Richard shrugged his shoulders.

'Here comes Mr Polkinghorn, the footman,' said the landlady. 'He does come here at times to see if there be any one to have a talk with. He can tell you all about your namesake.'

'I am not interested about her,' answered Richard. 'I have none that belong to me save the seven and my mother, and they—I know where they are, under my own roof.'

'Good-evening, Mr Polkinghorn; how do you find yourself?—And how is Miss Otterbourne?'

'We are both of us pretty well. She's been suffering a little from nettlerash, that has made her fractious, and she has rung the bell outrageous; but she's better now, and I'm middling, thank you. Worrited with her nettlerash and the constant ringing of the bell caused by the irritation. First, it was the blinds were not drawn to her fancy; then it was she wanted a lump of coal with the wood in the grate; and then the Venetian blinds must come down, or be turned, or pulled up; and then the geranium or pelargonium on the table—I'm blessed, Mrs Stokes, if I know what is the difference between a geranium and a pelargonium—wanted water; or she desired another book from the library. It really is wonderful, Mrs Stokes—I'll have a glass of beer, thank you—how a little matter upsets a whole household. It comes of lobster mayonaise or cucumber, one or t'other, which don't agree with the old woman. If she takes either of them, and she's roaring fond of them, she gets eruptions, generally nettlerash; and when she's got eruptions, it disturbs us all, keeps the whole household capering: one has to go for the doctor, another has to get cooling fomentations, and her temper is that awful, it is a wonder we stand it. But we know her, and put it down to disorder of the system. We must bear and forbear; must we not, Mrs Stokes? so we pass over all the aggravations, as good Christians and philanthropists.'

'You've not been introduced,' said the hostess. 'You don't know this gentleman, Mr Cable of Cornwall.'

'Cornwall!' exclaimed the footman.—'You don't happen to have come across the manor and mansion of Polkinghorn anywhere thereabouts, do you? Our family come from the west of England, and have a lordship called after us; but I don't exactly know where it is. Still, it's traditional in the family that there is one. We've come down in life; but so have many great folks; and, sir, what are our British aristocracy now?—mushrooms, sir, creatures of to-day. Bankers and brewers and civil engineers, who were not even known, who had not lifted their heads out of the dust, when the Polkinghorns were lords of manors and drove their coach-and-four.'

Mrs Stokes produced the ale.

'I'll take a mouthful of bread and cheese with it,' said the footman, who was not now in livery.—'So you, sir, are called Cable. We've a Cable among us.'

'Do you mean among the Polkinghorns?'

'Polkinghorns, sir!' said the footman, bridling up. 'I do not, sir, think such a name as Cable has found its way among us, into our tree, sir. I alluded to an inmate of the Hall, sir, a lady's-maid there, who is a Rope or a Cable, or something of that sort—possibly, as she is not stout, merely a Twine.' Then, as he finished his glass of ale: 'Excuse my freedom, sir; I am generally accounted a wit. I once sent a trifle to *Punch*.'

'Was it inserted?'

'I sent it, sir; that suffices. I do not myself suppose that our Cable does belong to you. There is a lack of style—a want of finish—you understand me, which proclaims inferiority. Not bad-looking, either, is Miss Josephine.'

'What!' shouted Cable, springing to his feet and striking the table. 'What did you say?'

Mr Polkinghorn stared at him and backed his chair from the table. He did not like the expression on the stranger's face; he thought the man might be a lunatic; therefore, with great presence of mind, he drew the cheese-knife from his plate and secreted it in the pocket of his short coat.

'I asked you a question,' cried Richard. 'What did you say?'

'Merely, sir, merely that—that we have a lady's-maid attending on our old woman who is good-looking, but wanting in what I should consider—breeding. If she be a relative, I am sorry'——

'What is her name?'

'Josephine Cable.'

'How long has she been with you?'

'Since last September. She was well recommended; she brought excellent testimonials. Her character quite irreproachable—from some good friends of ours, the Sellwoods of Essex, a respectable family, unfortunate in having gone into the Church. I should have preferred the army for them.'

'Why is she'—— Cable stopped; he was trembling. He put his hand to the table to steady himself. 'I mean—who is she?'

'I do not know,' answered Mr Polkinghorn. 'She is uncommunicative; that is what I mean when I say she has not the breed of a lady. She ain't at her ease and familiar with us. She is reserved, as she might call it; awkward, as I should say. If we ask her questions, she don't answer. She's maybe frightened at finding herself in such high society; and I'm not surprised. I don't fancy she was in other than a third-class situation before—with some people in business or profession—not real aristocrats. That

does make a person feel out of her element when she rises to our walk of life. It is just the same as if you were to invite a common sailor to a dinner-party among millionaires and aristocrats—how would he feel? He'd look this way and that and be without power of speech. He wouldn't know where to put his feet and how to behave himself. It is much the same with Miss Cable. She's not been brought up to our line of life, and don't understand it, and is as miserable among us as a common sailor would be among gentlemen and ladies.'

'Did you say *Miss* Cable?'

'To be sure I did. I don't suppose she's a married woman. She wears no gold wedding ring.'

'And her Christian name is?'——

'Josephine. But then we always call her Miss Cable, and our old woman calls her Cable.'

'She has never said a word to you of her family?'

'Not a word. Better not, I suspect. I don't fancy there's anything very high about it. Judging by her manners, I should say she was—excuse my saying it—a low lot.'

'Nor whence she comes?'

'Mum as a mummy—excuse the joke. I am said to be witty. Humour runs in the Polkinghorn blood.'

'Nor what brought her to take service?'

'Necessity—of course. No lady would so demean herself unless forced.—Will you take a glass of ale with me?'

'With pleasure,' answered Cable; 'and I'll ask you not to mention my name at your place—not to the young lady you speak of.'

'I understand,' said Mr Polkinghorn with a wink, and a tap of his nose with his finger. 'Poor relations are nuisances; they come a-sucking and a-sponging, and are a drag on a man who is making his way. No, sir, I'll not say a word.—May I ask if she *is* a relative?'

'I have not seen her. I cannot say.'

'Does the name Josephine run in the family, as John Thomas does in that of Polkinghorn?'

'We never had one baptised by that name.'

'I myself,' said the footman, 'intend to marry some day, so as to perpetuate John Thomas. I'm not sure that I may not take Miss Raffles. I won't deny that I had a tenderness towards the Cable at first; she is good-looking, has fine eyes, splendid hair; a brunette, you understand, with olive skin, and such a figure! But I could not stand the want of polish and ease which go with the true lady, and that she will never get among us.'

Richard left the room abruptly. He was greatly moved, partly with surprise at finding Josephine in such a position, partly with anger at the insolence of the footman.

This latter looked after him contemptuously. 'Well, Mrs Stokes,' he said, 'I've only come on two Cables in the course of my experience, and, dash me, if there be not a twist in them both.'

Richard went forth, and did not return to the inn till late. He walked by the river. He was disturbed in mind. Mr Sellwood had told him nothing of Josephine's plan of going into service; he had not felt himself authorised to do this; and at the time he saw Cable, he doubted whether Josephine's resolution might not be overcome. All that Cable knew was that she had surrendered the estate and left the Hall. She was proud, and would have nothing to do with a property that came to her, as she concluded, unjustly; and he was proud, he would accept no property that was offered to him by her. But that she had been so reduced in circumstances by this voluntary surrender as to oblige her to earn her bread by menial work, seemed to him impossible. Her father was a man of some fortune. It was not possible that he would consent to her leaving him for such a purpose. Yet, how else could he account for Josephine's being at Bewdley Manor in the capacity represented? There was a mistake. This could not be Josephine. Some one else was in the house who had assumed her name. He could not be satisfied till he had seen her. But he would not allow himself to be seen by her. He hobbled along the river-path, leaning on his stick, racking his brain over the questions that arose, seeking solutions which always escaped him. To whom at Hanford could he apply for information concerning the affairs and movements of his wife? There was no one but Mr Sellwood, and to him he would not write. His brother-in-law Jonas Flinders was dead, and he shrank from corresponding on the subject with any of his old mates.

Then he suddenly burst into a bitter laugh. Was this his Josephine, this servant-girl, whom the vulgar flunky, and with him her fellow-servants, despised as not up to their level, wanting in style—a low lot? Josephine, who had scorned his lack of breeding, was herself looked down on by the ignoble tribe of pariahs on civilisation! It was a just judgment on her. How she must toss and writhe, what agonies of rage and humiliation she must endure in such association! 'A low lot!' shouted Cable, slashing at the bulrush-heads on the bank, and laughed savagely—'a low lot!' But then a gentler feeling came over him, a wave of his old kindliness and pity, so long suppressed or beaten back. He saw his haughty, splendid, wilful Josephine surrounded by these common-minded, swaggering, vain, unintelligent, and debased creatures—alone, cold, stern, eating out her heart rather than show her disgust and shame. If it had been misery to him to be transferred to a condition of life above him to which he was unfitted, it must be misery to her to be flung down into a sphere to her infinitely distasteful and repellent. He was a man who could hold his own, or retire with dignity. She was a girl, helpless. His heart began to flutter, and he turned his steps into the path by a wicket gate. The evening was still, the sky clear. The great trees stood against the silver-gray sky as blots. The dew was falling heavily; the grass was charged with water. He might as well have been wading in a stream as walking through it. So heavily was the dew falling, that the leaves of the trees were laden with the moisture, and bowed under the weight, and dripped as with rain. The glow-worms shone in the damp banks and among the grass under the tree trunks. The stars were twinkling in the sky, looking golden in contrast with the bluish light of the glow-worms; an auroral haze hung over the set sun, fringed with a faint tinge of ruddy brown before it died into the deep gray blue of the night-sky.

He drew near to the house, and a watchdog in the back court began to bark. It had heard his steps on the gravel of the drive. Richard stepped off the carriage-way upon the turf and remained still. The dog, hearing no further noise, presently desisted from barking. Then Richard moved on through the grass till he came where he could see the front of Bewdley Manor-house. Three tall windows were lighted, one somewhat brilliantly, the next less so, the third least of all. It was clear that all three belonged to one room, perhaps a drawing-room, and that the lamp that illumined it was at one end. The window which was at the further end was half open, the blind was drawn up, and Richard could make out gilt frames to large pictures on a dark wall. He stood, looking at the three windows, wondering whether a shadow would pass, and by the shadow he could tell who it was that passed. Did he desire to see Josephine again? He shrank from so doing; but he was uneasy at the thought that she was in this great house, a servant, with fellows like Polkinghorn about her. As he stood thus, looking up, he heard the notes of a piano issue from the open window. The first chords that were struck made him start and a shiver pass through his limbs. Then he heard a clear voice, rich and sweet, sing:

> O wie wogt es sich schön auf der Fluth,
> Wenn die müde Welle im Schlummer ruht.

It was the familiar song from *Oberon*. When Richard heard this, he put his hands to his ears to shut out the sound, and ran as hard as he could run with his faulty thigh along the road; and the dog heard his retreating steps and barked furiously. Cable heeded nothing, but ran on, with the sweat breaking out on his brow and dripping from his face, as it had dripped on that night when he ran to Brentwood Hall, and as now the dew was dripping from the leaves of the trees in the park. Only when he reached the river-bank outside the park gate, away from the sight of the house and the sound of the song, did he halt and strike his stick angrily, passionately, into the oozy soil, and cry out, half sobbingly, half savagely: 'A low lot! A low lot!'

(To be continued.)

BOAT-ACCOMMODATION IN PASSENGER-SHIPS.

The inadequacy of the boats and other life-saving appliances provided for the use of the passengers and crews of our sea-going passenger-ships was demonstrated very forcibly at the loss of the *Oregon*. Seafarers are well aware that this evil has been growing worse *pari passu* with the increasing dimensions of the ships themselves, consequent on the resistless torrent of emigration towards the land of the setting sun. The keenness of foreign competition, intensified by the system of subsidies, has, however, effectually barred the way to any alleviation. The six days' passage across the Atlantic in the *Umbria* is a pleasure-trip in one's own yacht, when we compare it with the fifteen days' discomfort so vividly depicted by Dickens. No expense is spared in providing all those articles which conduce to the safety or comfort of the travelling public so long as the ship remains intact. If, however, it should be deemed necessary to quit the floating palace, it would be found that not more than one-third of the passengers could be accommodated in the frail boats! Hence we may paraphrase lines in the *Tempest*, and say, 'Here is everything advantageous to life save means to live when danger threatens.'

Many an officer of a steamship cleaving the dark-blue waters with her iron prow at the rate of eighteen or twenty knots an hour, has had every sense abnormally quickened as he paced the lonely bridge. Despite himself, his thoughts would revert to the awful responsibility resting upon him. Fourteen hundred passengers aroused from their warm berths at a moment's notice to face the bitter blast of a cyclonic storm, and the salt spray freezing almost ere it falls. The indescribable panic; the ugly rush for the boats; the refined women and hardy men cast headlong into the sea; the wild shrieks of the drowning, as they drift away into eternity; and the final plunge of the quivering fabric into the seething abyss, with nothing in sight save the blurred outlines of a gigantic iceberg with which it has collided—all form a ghastly panorama.

The *Oregon* had over six hundred passengers on board; but her boats were only capable of carrying one-half of that number. It was fortunate that she managed to keep afloat for eight hours after receiving her mortal injury, that the sea was comparatively smooth, and that a passing steamer remained alongside, to which all hands were transferred in batches. We doubt whether otherwise the Cunard Company would still be able to assert that they have never lost the life of a passenger during the forty years of their corporate existence. The loss of their crack-ship served the purpose of Sydney Smith's proverbial bishop; attention was drawn to the danger which menaced passengers at sea; and Mr Mundella appointed a Departmental Committee to inquire into the supply of boats, rafts, and life-saving apparatus in British merchant-ships. In the meantime, the awful loss of life resulting from the collision between the Australian clipper *Kapunda* and the barque *Ada Melmore* had accentuated the demand for an alteration in the rules which govern the employment of life-saving gear at sea. The deductions of the Committee are excellent so far as they go. Indisputable facts have been placed on record, but very little new light has been thrown on the question at issue. We are not authoritatively informed that it is possible to provide desirable appliances, auxiliary to the boats in the davits, which shall be sufficient, in conjunction with them, to take off all hands from a sinking ship. Neither are we made any wiser as to the relative efficiency of the various plans proposed to this effect, if we except a short reference to Roper's Raft and Berthon's Collapsible Boat, both of which inventions are before the public.

The logical outcome of the inquiry would appear to be that a ship should not be allowed to carry more souls than she has room for in her boats. One would naturally shrink from recommending such a drastic reform as this. The better-class British ships have to comply with far more stringent regulations than ships sailing from continental ports, and if, in some quixotic spirit, a law should be passed which limited unduly the

number of passengers, our argosies would either cease to run, or would be placed under the protection of some other less exacting flag. If it were possible to frame an international agreement, something might be accomplished in this direction; but there would be an inevitable rise in the cost of transit, followed by a sympathetic diminution in the number of emigrants, which might not be altogether advantageous.

The Merchant Shipping Acts of 1854 and 1856 specify the number of boats which must be carried. The scale is founded entirely on the net tonnage, or, in other words, on the actual space in a ship which is available for carrying cargo. When the Acts were drawn up, ships were smaller than now, and were principally wooden sailing packets. The net tonnage of a sailing-ship is a fair indication of her size; but the net tonnage of a steamer is no criterion in this respect. Some Atlantic liners have boat accommodation for only ten per cent. of the total number of people on board. The Cunard Company carry double the number of boats that the law requires of them; but even in their *Gallia*, one of the best provided ships afloat, the boats could not find room for more than fifty-six per cent. of the passengers and crew. Steamships making excursions, and short voyages to Ireland and the continent, provide boat-accommodation for about twelve per cent. of the total number of persons on board; but even this low figure is three per cent. more than the statutory obligation!

The Cunarders *Etruria* and *Umbria* have each a gross tonnage of seven thousand seven hundred tons, and a net tonnage of three thousand three hundred tons. The Anchor liner *City of Rome* has a gross tonnage of eight thousand one hundred tons, and a net tonnage of three thousand five hundred tons. The enormous difference between the gross and the net tonnage is due to the allowance made for the space occupied by the crew and the engines. This disparity led the proprietors of the Suez Canal to levy dues on the gross tonnage in every instance, which seems a just method, having regard to the end in view, inasmuch as the absolute size of the ship to be handled is certainly the most important factor in narrow waters.

There are, however, grave obstacles to the substitution of the gross for the net tonnage as the basis on which to construct a hard-and-fast boat scale. We should avoid Scylla only to be dazed in Charybdis. Such a rule if strictly interpreted might press unfairly upon large ships in which the carriage of passengers is purely a secondary consideration, as the boats carried by this class of ship under the present system would probably be more than enough to satisfy all requirements. Moreover, two ships, although equal in displacement, may be very unequal in their adaptation for carrying boats either on deck or in the davits. Any increase in the number of boats, unless accompanied by a corresponding increase in the ship's company of sailors competent to handle them, would be of no avail, but rather a delusion and a snare. It goes without saying that boats are useless unless there be able seamen and skilled officers enough to keep them from being swamped. This state of perfection is a long way off, for shipowners will tell you that, owing to the depressed state of the shipping industry, it would be simply suicidal to incur any addition to the working expenses. The ships are much under-manned, or at least the complement is adjusted to such a nicety that the crews are insufficient to manœuvre the few boats carried at present. The Nemesis of competition sits close behind the managing director, and dogs the footsteps of the overlookers.

Seven boats is the maximum demanded by the Acts, no matter how big the ship may be, or how many souls may be on board of her. These boats must be manageable, or else they cannot be got into the water without great exertion. Steamships of over one thousand tons net must be fitted with two lifeboats; but as they may be of any make, we must not confound them with the boats built to the specifications of the Lifeboat Institution, which are too cumbrous for use in short-handed ships at sea. The boats must be in the davits, fully equipped with water and the necessary gear. Every boat ought to carry a coarse canvas bag and a can full of oil, so that, when a boat is lowered in a heavy sea, the bag may be filled with oil, and towed over that part of the boat which is exposed to the force of the sea. This simple method has, as we have over and over again assured our readers, been proved to be effectual in smoothing the tops of the angry breakers. The boats of cargo-vessels are of all sorts and conditions, and in a great number of sailing-ships it is impossible to launch a boat should a man fall overboard. It will be safer and more humane to keep the ship on her course if the weather is at all dirty, than to risk the lives of an undisciplined boat's crew. An experienced master in the *Earl of Jersey* lowered a boat to rescue an apprentice. Neither boat nor crew has since been heard of; and a bereaved army officer advertises a reward of a thousand pounds for news of his two heroic sons, whom he will never meet on this side of the grave. Some sailing-ships carry their boats stowed one within the other, the innermost being made a receptacle for all kinds of old lumber. It would take half an hour to clean out the rubbish, find the gear, and get tackles aloft for lifting the boat over the side.

Even in steamships where the boats are conveniently situated, the foremast hands are as unfamiliar with the art of rowing as a ploughboy. The best merchant seamen seldom set foot in a boat propelled by oars. On the other hand, it is quite a common experience for a life-buoy to be dropped unexpectedly from one of our troopships and a cry raised of 'Man overboard!' in order to test the rapidity with which this duty can be performed. The engines are stopped, the boat manned and lowered, the buoy picked up, the boat returned to the davits, and the ship full speed ahead again in the short interval of five minutes. It is not sufficient to station men to the boats after the manner of our merchant steamships. Practice must go hand in hand with theory, and the men should be taught to be thoroughly at home in the boats when cast off from the ship. Such practical training if made compulsory would involve detention in moderate weather; but if rigorously enforced, the smartest ships would still be to the front.

The Collapsible Boats built by the Berthon Boat

Company have the sanction of the Committee, and are excellent contrivances for use in ships where the limited deck-space does not allow of a sufficient number of the ordinary boats. The Berthon boats are made of canvas, made water-tight by painting with a specially prepared composition. The canvas is stretched tightly over a wooden framework both on the outside and on the inside. The whole boat folds up very compactly, somewhat after the manner of a globular Chinese lantern, with the oars and fittings stowed snugly inside, and a cover is placed over all. The cover being stripped off, the hooks of the davit tackles are fastened into two slings, which pass under the bow and stern of the boat respectively; and when a strain is brought to bear on the tackles, the boat opens out of its own weight. Thereupon, two men jump in, insert some cross pieces, which prevent her reclosing, and she is ready for her life-saving mission. Our troopships have carried Berthon's boats for some time, and they fulfil the expectation of their designer. The form has been handed down from antiquity, and the Irish coracle is a primitive example. Five collapsed Berthon boats occupy the space of one ordinary boat. Roper's Raft forms a bridge when not in use; and when necessary, it can be disconnected and rigged as a schooner. Rafts do not commend themselves except as a last refuge. The raft of the well-known *Medusa* will never be forgotten. An American raft made a successful passage from New York to this country in the year 1867 in forty-three days. One of the best boat-lowering apparatus we have seen is that of Captain E. J. Evans, of Shaw, Savill's line, which is simplicity itself.

The Committee hold very poor views with regard to the utility of any kind of boats, so that it behoves our shipbuilders to make every effort to insure that the compartments into which an iron ship is divided may be water-tight. The construction of the hull of a transatlantic steamship has reached a high degree of perfection; but it is a polite fiction to state that the partitions are sufficiently strong to withstand the pressure of the water pouring in through a chasm in her side. It is almost impossible to have water-tight compartments; and if the ship be struck at the edge of a transversal partition, we should have two compartments knocked into one, and the safety of the ship endangered. Naval architects are in favour of a longitudinal partition extending along the middle of the ship from stem to stern. This structural weakness is so familiar to captains, that the first care immediately after collision is to shore up the partition.

The officers of a passenger steamer belonging to the large Companies are the elite of the merchant service, holding testimonials of exceptional merit. Out of the six officers of a Peninsular and Oriental steamship, four were qualified to act as masters; and the second-officer had passed the extra-master's examination; but we are not told how many of them were competent to handle an open boat in a seaway! The officers in the merchant service have one failing in common: they shave the outlying portions of the land dangerously close in all weathers, so that any exceptional surface-drift of the ocean may place the ship high and dry on some hidden reef. The public are in a great measure to blame for this reprehensible custom; they will not brook delay, and a commander is apt to be moved by the *vox populi* which can reach the Board-room of his Company. For a similar reason, ships keep up a higher speed in foggy weather than is prudent. On the southern edge of the Bank of Newfoundland, where the fishermen lie at anchor, it is not uncommon for a dense fog to continue throughout a whole week; and frequently the Atlantic liners make a passage across without a sight of the sun to verify their positions. Vessels are forbidden by statute to proceed recklessly in foggy weather; but the passage has to be made within a given period, and the regulations are inoperative. Blasts of the steam-whistle are deceptive in a fog, as two successive blasts will appear to proceed from quite different distances, although the signalling ship has not changed her relative position. Two White Star liners going in opposite directions lately collided in a dense fog while going ahead full speed; and the captains were censured for not slowing down, as loss of life occurred. The court was in part composed of steamboat captains, and as the law on this point is universally ignored, a study of the logbooks of these commanders would probably perplex an outsider. Unfortunately, icebergs and fogs are generally met with in the same latitudes, thus rendering the navigation doubly perilous.

Apart from the eagerness to shorten the passage, as displayed in cutting off corners and racing through fog, we find that passenger steamships are generally placed in perilous positions by causes from without, over which they can have no control. A good lookout may distinguish an iceberg; but it is not an easy matter to keep clear of a derelict (abandoned) ship low down in the water. These partially submerged vessels constitute a formidable source of danger to the fast steamship. The American government issue monthly charts of the North Atlantic and distribute them to shipmasters. A glance at one before us shows a score of death-traps in the shape of derelict ships floating in a small portion of the ocean adjacent to New York!

Worse than derelicts are the ships of all nations which fail to keep their side-lights burning brightly from dusk to daylight. The custom holds in many, although the oil would cost only fourpence per night. This evasion of the law is of too grave a nature to be dealt with by the infliction of a small fine. The Board of Trade officer can compel the owners to place lamps on board a ship; but when the dock-gates close behind her, the lamps are carefully stowed away below. We have seen lamps trimmed with cocoanut oil, which became solid in the wintry weather of the Channel, and absolutely refused to burn. Hence, it is necessary to take into consideration not only the quantity but also the quality of the oil used on board ship. What is more conducive to the disturbance of the mental equilibrium of a harassed officer on the bridge than a flickering light suddenly displayed by some wretched ship which lay unperceived in the darkness of the night not many yards distant!

The risks run in the North Atlantic are greater than in any other ocean; but there has been a signal immunity from loss of life. If time were not an important element, the passenger-ships

would conform to the law in every particular. Even now, a great portion of the accidents may be traced to the undermanning and flagrant law-breaking in sailing-ships and small steamers.

'Famous for ships, famous for horses' is as true of Great Britain as of ancient Attica; but if we are to retain our foremost position and to make ocean-travelling safe, it will be necessary to pay attention to undermanned and ill-found ships, to rigidly enforce the law with respect to side-lights, and to train our officers and men in the manœuvring of boats.

AN ANGLO-INDIAN MOTHER.

AN INDIAN SKETCH.

To the dancing, flirting, pleasure-loving portion of the male sex, she will always be a disappointment. She will never have her card filled at least a week before the ball comes off, for the good reason that she never goes to balls. She will never stand in draughty verandas with what she calls a 'wrap' across her fair shoulders, and talk inane nothings to her partner, while far into the night the weary band plays galops and valses that grow more and more out of tune. She will never keep her husband waiting long weary hours while she ruins her health by turning day into night at the frequent dances she attends. No man will ever pay her compliments, though every one can see she is pretty enough to receive them. To ball-loving under-secretaries, unexceptionable aides-de-camp, spurred cavalry officers, and gallant antediluvians in the shape of well-nigh retired colonels, she will always prove a disappointment and an aggravation. A star shining on them at an unapproachable distance—a scent of mountain flowers that rests on them for a moment—an unattainable good that under no circumstances could ever have been theirs, because they are aware that she and her thoughts and simple aspirations are above and beyond them.

How often I have seen her going about with her big little family, surrounded by natives of different castes and kinds. She greets me with a pleasant smile on her fair face; she stops a moment, and seems to ask me just the right question and say just the right thing; and when, having said good-bye, I pause and look back on her and her train of children and followers, I hope, when I at last make up my mind to forsake my bachelorhood, I may be blessed enough to find such a wife as she. You know that neither you nor I, nor any other man, considers her husband at all worthy of her—that, from our point of view, could scarcely be; but he is a good fellow enough, and that is the best we in our generosity can say for him. She considers him a thousand times better than herself. She treats him as such a woman would treat the man she loves; though of course none of us men can understand for a single moment how she can love him.

She is an excellent housekeeper, not disdaining the lower portion of her woman's work. She is generous and gentle with her servants, and her table is always good. But it is as a mother that she shines the most. Her children are like her, and she is like them. They obey her because they love her, and her reproof is a greater punishment to them than any blow would be. She has never left them to servants. They have lived their Indian lives with her as their companion, and boys and girls alike have got the impress of her true woman's mind. She has taught them their first lessons; and under her tuition they are in different and interesting stages of *Mavor's Spelling-book*, from 'Ba, Bi, Bo,' to words of alarming length and hopeless pronunciation.

In the family, she is perfectly happy. Talk of balls, big dinners, picnics, and luncheon-parties; she has other attractions, and she does not need these to help her to pass her life. Look at her now in her happy family circle; see the peaceful untroubled smile in her sweet eyes; and as you look, remember that she will never be so happy again. There is looming for her in the distance a time which comes sooner or later to every Anglo-Indian mother, and when it comes you will see some things in her face which are strangers to it now.

As the happy years pass, she grows more thoughtful. Now and then, a wistful expression comes into her eyes. If, unheedingly, you talk of the future to her, you feel sorry you have done so the next moment, as she changes the subject suddenly and looks unlike herself. After a time, she will steal at odd moments into the children's room, and moving gently from bed to bed, will watch each sleeping face with a deep pain at her heart; while the black woman in attendance, whose child has died but yesterday, looks up with a cheerful smile and tells her 'all the babas are asleep.'

And so the very last month arrives. Grindlay & Co. have taken passages for a gentleman and lady, six children, and two native servants. The children are in raptures. They jump and clap their hands; they fling their old toys into the compound with contemptuous jeers at their battered ugliness, and ask her a hundred questions about the English toyshops, the mighty ship, the wonderful place where there are no black people, and where their innocent young minds imagine no one tells lies or steals, because they are English. She packs their small wardrobes into overland boxes; she wanders in and out through the old familiar rooms, and out into the compound, where she has often seen the children play, and where, if she return ever so often to the same house, she will never see them play again. She lets her precious tears fall on the head of their small rough pony, when she gives him a carrot for the last time; and on that of an old brown and white pariah dog they have loved and cherished.

The children have very different thoughts from these. Twenty years hence they mean to come back to this very house—they tell her; and she is to have all their old pets and servants ready to receive them! She listens to these plans, which may never be realised; she looks into their small earnest faces with wistful eyes, and turns away.

We in the station see her go with a decided

feeling of regret; we feel, when she and her babies have left, a certain good will have passed away with them. We are of the earth; she will one day be of heaven, we believe. It has been pleasant to watch her life and see the simple faith that guided it. Doubtless, to know her has made us all at times feel a longing for something better. Her world is not the tinsel one of gaiety and pleasure; the light that illumines the stages on which she acts out her life comes, we feel, direct from heaven; while ours is but the garish glow of the footlights. Pure, good, and beautiful, she passes away from us; and probably not one of us may ever look on her gentle face again. Still, we cannot forget her, though she passes from our little world into another; the impress of her purity and sweetness will long remain upon our memories' page.

And so she goes. Her home is broken up; her family and she will soon be parted; that is the one appalling thought that is with her—the last at night, the first in the morning. Her children will grow up away from her, and in time they will forget her. Other hands will lead their faltering footsteps; other voices will cheer or chide them. She, their mother (after two rather sad years, in which the shadow of her parting hangs on her like a funeral pall), goes back to India. Having said good-bye to them at night, she cannot brave the morrow; but stealing once more to the side of each sleeping child, gazes with an awful broken-hearted sorrow on the well-loved faces, and breathes a helpless prayer for her deserted little ones, and tears herself away. To-morrow, when they wake, she will smile on them no more.

'Not, no more; oh! do not say no more,' I hear some Anglo-Indian mother like herself exclaim. 'Some day, let her come back, and be united to her children once again. Let her forget the lost years in their young lives when she is only a far-off dream to them; when friends in England are all in all to their baby souls; and "mamma" in India is a mythical somebody the young ones have quite forgotten, and the elder remember now but dimly. When she prays her simple prayers, she knows that "He is faithful that promised," and thinks and believes that they will meet again; and so, as she passes once more across the moonlit sea back to her foreign home, hugging the fond hope of a future meeting to her gentle breast, let us say, as the ship grows a dim speck on the horizon, "Amen! and God bless her."'

WHY IS SUGAR SO LOW IN PRICE?

THE question which heads this paper seems a very simple one, yet the answer to it is difficult, and involves many remote considerations, as well as some immediate contingencies that are not pleasant to contemplate. In order that the reader may understand these, it is necessary that he should be put in possession of a few main facts in the history of the sugar-trade. These facts might be looked at in the light of economic laws; but no acquaintance with the dismal science is requisite to enable any one to take in the present position of affairs. As the matter is one of great importance, from a social as much as from an economic point of view, its consideration should prove both interesting and instructive.

At various times, sugar has been extracted from different substances, chief among these being the sugar-cane, grown in Demerara, British Guiana, Java, and the West India islands. Cane-sugar is made in this way. Shortly before the cane-trees begin to flower, they are cut down; and the saccharine matter being squeezed out, is sent to London, Bristol, Greenock, and other places, to be refined. This process consists mainly in removing impurities by filtering and boiling; after which the fluid is crystallised in different sizes for the market. Cane-sugar, being a tropical product, is easily grown; the refining process is simple and inexpensive; and there are no duties of any kind to be paid in connection with its manufacture.

As stated, this cane-sugar supplied our needs for a very long time, till one year (1855) there was a failure in the crop, and prices went up. In that year, a new kind of sugar, which had been in use for some little time on the continent, came into notice. It was made from beetroot, grown in Austria, Germany, and France, which countries afford the peculiar atmospheric conditions necessary for its successful culture. That saccharine matter could be got from beetroot was a chemical discovery made during last century; but it was not till the French government specially encouraged sugar-manufacture that the discovery was greatly made use of; and in its infancy, beet sugar-making had to be fostered by enactments excluding its great rival, cane-sugar. After the beetroot—not the red kind we know so well, but a long white root—has been washed and trimmed, it is cut up, and lies soaking in water till the saccharine juice exudes from it. This liquid is boiled, treated chemically, and crystallised—the process being longer and more expensive than with cane-sugar. In use, however, the new sugar proved quite as good, and people soon discovered this. It was at this point that a somewhat mysterious thing occurred; not only was Austrian beet-sugar being sold in all the continental markets, but it came plentifully into our own, and at prices very much cheaper than cane-sugar. How this could be, English refiners were at a loss to understand; but the secret soon came out. It was this: In Austria and other foreign countries, sugar-refiners pay excise duties, just as whisky distillers have to do with us. Excise duty was levied on each refiner, not according to the quantity of beetroot he used, but according to the quantity of sugar he might be expected to get from it. A good refiner, however, soon discovered that, by growing better roots and by improving his machinery, he could make a great deal more from each ton of roots than the government calculated; and any sugar that he made beyond the government estimate of course went untaxed. This fact stimulated refiners still more to increase their exertions; and by-and-by the Austrian sugar-yield became too great for home use. Burdened with an excise duty, Austrian refiners found they could not send their goods to other countries to compete with our cane-sugar, which had no tax to pay. This was pointed out to the government, who, not unwilling to extend their foreign commerce, agreed to repay the duty on all sugar sent

abroad (*The Sugar Bounties*, by W. Smart, M.A.; Blackwood & Sons). With this arrangement the refiners were quite satisfied, as well they might, for a reason that presently emerged. Excise was calculated at so much sugar per so much beetroot; but under the new arrangement it was paid back simply on so much sugar. Now, as shown above, a great part of this sugar had paid no excise duty at all, and the money returned was simply a present to the refiner. With this unearned money, he was able in every market to undersell cane-sugar, which got no such favour.

Cane-growers soon saw that there was something wrong, and that the demand for their produce was rapidly falling off. They took active measures to cheapen cane-sugar as much as possible; but do what they might, the foreign refiner with his bounty at his back was able to checkmate them, and still make a handsome profit himself. Begun in an underhand way, the bounty system was continued openly, because these foreign governments saw with satisfaction that by its help their sugar-trade was increasing by leaps and bounds. So rapidly did things develop, that now beet-sugar, introduced only thirty years ago, supplies this country to the extent of six hundred thousand tons annually, while cane-sugar only gives us four hundred thousand tons.

We are now in a position to answer the question with which this paper started: Why is sugar so cheap? It is because certain continental nations virtually raise a heavy sum yearly, and give it to their sugar-refiners, to enable them to under-sell cane-sugar growers. This sum is estimated at about one million two hundred thousand pounds a year, extracted from the pockets of foreign taxpayers for our benefit, without counting that portion of the bounty which refiners may be supposed to retain as profit, but which they will disgorge if necessary to undersell cane-sugar growers.

Having answered our initial question, it might be as well to ask ourselves, what effect this bounty system has other than the lowering of prices? On the continent, there has been a great improvement in agriculture, owing to the efforts made in the better cultivation of beetroot. Then machinery has been made more effective, labour rendered more efficient, and men employed who might otherwise have been idle. But, on the other hand, it must never be forgotten that all that beetroot sugar has gained, cane-sugar has lost. Sugar-cane is not grown in the West India islands without much expenditure of labour and capital, and only after great care in planting and draining. All this will be lost if cane-sugar goes to the wall, and already sugar estates are falling out of cultivation. Again, the sugar-trade was the means of civilising these tropical countries, and should the growing of sugar cease, civilisation may be retarded, for the natives are too indolent to shift for themselves. All these facts have been clearly established by the evidence given before several Royal Commissions, and they are serious enough. Various remedies have been proposed, but any discussion of them in this paper would be out of place. It may be mentioned that the government are at present endeavouring to arrange an International Convention at which the matter might be discussed, and some plan adopted to put the sugar industry on a better footing. The matter is one that concerns everybody, for every one is a consumer of sugar in some form, and the more information is spread about it, the better.

SOME DOGS.

At a meeting of the British Association at Aberdeen, Sir John Lubbock read a very interesting paper on the Intelligence of Dogs, the main point of his discourse being that, in place of trying to make the dog understand us, we should endeavour to understand the dog. Sir John illustrated his lecture by an anecdote of his own dog, which, he told his hearers, was gifted with intelligence enough to choose correctly, out of seven cards denoting the different days of the week, that one which represented the actually present day. Sir John's dog, in fact, is very like our old friend the 'learned pig' of the fair in point of intelligence; but it has occurred to the writer, who has a considerable acquaintance amongst dogs, that it might be worth while to make public a few dog stories illustrative of canine intelligence, each of which, he thinks, is in no way inferior to that told by Sir John Lubbock. Without vouching for the complete truth of all the following anecdotes, the writer imagines, from his own experience of the animal, that where he has not been able to fully verify facts, there is at least no reason to doubt the *bona fides* of those who have related the following incidents.

The first dog of which I shall speak belonged (he is dead now) to an old friend of mine. He was a fine collie, called Nero. Like some other dogs of my acquaintance, he was in the habit of going to the butcher's each morning with his master, who always gave Nero his purchases in a fish-basket, to be by him carried home. One day it occurred to the master that Nero might as well be taught to go to market by himself. So he began each morning to say the word 'Butcher' very solemnly to Nero immediately before setting out; to which word Nero gravely listened, slowly wagging his tail the while. This went on for a few weeks with clockwork regularity. Then came a wet day. Nero was given his basket as usual, with a note in it asking the butcher—who had been warned beforehand—to exchange it for a pound of steak, and taken to the door. Then his master said to him 'Butcher,' enunciating the word even more solemnly than usual. Nero looked thoughtful and hesitated. He was then motioned off in the accustomed direction. Presently he went a few steps and looked back. 'Butcher, Nero, butcher,' repeated his instructor; and eventually the dog, after two or three false starts, went off with a rather dejected appearance, and my friend went indoors to await the result. In due time Nero returned with the steak; and for a year or two afterwards went to the butcher's almost daily, always bringing back his purchases without mishap.

There used to be a large black retriever belonging to one of the sailors at Greenhithe which I knew well. This dog was always to be seen on or near the little landing-stage, and he always 'begged' to strangers. Those who understood, used to give him a penny, with which he ran off to a little shop near at hand, whence he speedily returned with a large biscuit in his

mouth. This he always brought to the donor of the penny, or else to his master, never attempting to eat it until permission was given him. This, like Nero, was a dog which might have been taught much. He may be at Greenhithe still, for aught I know to the contrary; but it is some years since I have been there myself.

So many stories have been current during recent years of canine sagacity, that one is prepared to believe a great deal with regard to the doings and sensible proceedings of the 'friend of man.' A curious story of this kind has lately been told by the Secretary of King's College Hospital, London. He states that the porter in charge of the entrance hall was one day lately attracted by the loud barking of a dog at the door of the hospital. He found there three dogs, one very much injured and exhausted by loss of blood, and other two, who, it seems, had attracted the porter's attention by their barking, evidently friends of his, with nothing particularly the matter with them, for they ran away as soon as their object was accomplished. The injured dog had apparently cut his foot with a piece of glass, and he was traced by blood-marks to the spot where the accident happened. From this track it was clear that the animal had come by the shortest possible cut to the hospital, his two friends accompanying him to call attention to his condition.

Stories of doggie's affection are common enough; but I know of none more touching than that told by a Mrs C——, who once gave a favourite carriage dog to a friend to keep for her during her prolonged absence. The following is the brief of her story as told in the *Chicago Mail*. For the child of the family this dog conceived one of those preferences for which dogs, above all other animals of the brute creation, have been distinguished. He played with her, walked with her, ate by her, slept near her, followed her if she rode, and mourned inconsolably if she left home without him. It was the evil fate of this little child to contract the scarlet fever, and through all her illness the dog never left her side unless forced to do so, and then his cries were so unceasing that, for quiet's sake, he was admitted again to the sickroom. The little girl died; and her disconsolate friend laid himself at full length beside the coffin, rising now and then to lick the cold face. When the coffin was carried from the house, he followed it; and when the small mound that covered it was raised, he resumed his watch there. No entreaties could persuade him to leave it. He never tasted food again; and in the course of nature followed his little friend—it may be beyond the confines of that mysterious hereafter, where those who love are reunited.

Another dog-and-child story well worth repeating was lately told in the *Philadelphia Times*, full details being given, in case of any doubt as to the writer's veracity. Here the dog was a nearly full-grown bull-pup belonging to Mr Thomas M'Glone, who resides at 1017 Locust Street, Philadelphia. Mr M'Glone expresses himself 'willing to back him against the canine world for intelligence.' 'In the rear of Mr M'Glone's house is a cellar twelve feet deep. The entrance to it is covered with a rickety trap-door. One day the little child of one of Mr M'Glone's neighbours wandered into the yard, and was enjoying a romp with the bull-pup, when it fell on the cellar door. The door quivered, and gradually sunk downward on its rusty hinges. The pup saw the child's peril, and springing forward, grabbed its dress between his teeth, and, bracing himself, tugged with might and main to pull the child back to terra firma. The door continued to sink, however, and the dog was not heavy enough to support the weight of the child. He seemed to realise this, but never wavered in his duty, and when the door fell with a crash, the dog and child went down together. The heavy door fell on the dog's back as he stood on the cellar floor with the child lying between his legs. The child's cries and the dog's howls attracted the attention of Mr M'Glone, who rescued them both from the pit. The child was uninjured, but the dog was considerably bruised.' 'The pup undoubtedly saved the child's life,' says Mr M'Glone, 'and his value has appreciated in my eyes about one hundred per cent.'

Yet another story from America must be told here, though this time I am unable to give equally full details. Lion was a huge Newfoundland, whose mistress lives in Boston, and who gives continual proofs of his immense sagacity. The following is a case in point:

One day a lady called on Lion's mistress. During her call Lion came in rather slyly, lay down on the parlour carpet, and went to sleep. The conversation ran on, and the visitor said finally: 'What a handsome Newfoundland you have!'

Lion opened one eye.

'Yes,' said his mistress; 'he is a very good dog, and takes excellent care of the children.'

Lion opened the other eye and waved his tail complacently to and fro along the carpet.

'When the baby goes out he always goes with her, and I feel perfectly sure that then no harm can come to her,' his mistress went on.

Lion's tail thumped up and down violently on the carpet.

'And he is so gentle to them all, and such a playmate and companion to them, that we would not take a thousand dollars for him.'

Lion's tail now went up and down, to and fro, and round and round, with great and undisguised glee.

'But,' said his mistress, 'Lion has one serious fault.'

Total subsidence of Lion's tail, together with the appearance of an expression of great concern on his face.

'He *will* come in here with his dirty feet and lie down on the carpet, when I have told him time and again that he mustn't do it.'

Here Lion arose with an air of the utmost dejection and humiliation and slunk out of the room, with his lately exuberant tail totally crestfallen. Such is the story as told. Lion is probably a dog after Sir John Lubbock's own heart.

The following story was told as 'having the merit of truth:'

A gentleman in one of our suburbs owns, or did own, a fine specimen of the spaniel breed, which is very fond of children, and which, when any little ones visit his master's house, constitutes himself their companion, playmate, and

guardian. A few days ago a lady with an infant visited the gentleman, and in the course of the day the child was laid on a pillow on the floor to amuse itself for a time. The dog took his place near the little one as usual. The day was hot and the flies many, and they made the baby the target of frequent attacks. This rendered her restless. Doggie watched her for a few minutes, and then, walking close up, with his nose or paw drove away every fly as soon as it lit on the baby's face, and this so gently as not to disturb her in the least. The dog's actions attracted the attention of the mother and others, who were filled with astonishment at his sagacious kindness; but to one who has watched the dog as I have watched him, his power of observation is never *surprising*, however wonderful it may be, and indeed is.

The value of sheep-dogs is well known; but I believe the one whose sagacity I am now about to commemorate stands out almost alone amongst his fellows. His master is a small farmer, and the proprietor of a single cow. For him the dog acts as cowherd. Each morning the dog's dinner is tied up in paper and fastened round his neck, after which he drives the cow to pasture. He remains near the cow all day, and as nearly as possible at mid-day he always slips the collar over his head, tears open his parcel, and eats his meal with the air of one who has earned it. Then he pushes the collar on again with his paws, and resumes his guard until dusk, when he drives the cow home. This story is vouched for by several people who have witnessed the whole 'performance,' and who know the dog well.

One or two of the above anecdotes have appeared in print, being published in a London newspaper to which the present writer communicated them some time ago. For the rest, I have said that I cannot exactly vouch for their complete accuracy; for in these days, one has to be very careful in guaranteeing the truth of even the most probable occurrences. I have in my note-book several stories of canine intelligence even more wonderful than any of the foregoing; but these I refrain from giving here, inasmuch as I have not been able to prove their truth, even to my own satisfaction. But I would say in conclusion, that a considerable experience of dogs has made me disinclined to refuse evidence to many a dog story which would strike the sceptic as highly improbable, so great is my belief in the animal's sagacity. And I feel convinced that any one who makes at all a careful study of the dog cannot fail to believe in his *reason* equally with myself; for there are things done by dogs which can never be explained as merely the outcome of what is termed animal instinct.

TRINITY HOUSE DINNERS.

Amongst the muniments of the London Trinity House are some quaint entries showing how the 'Bretheren' of that corporation managed their eating and drinking arrangements in times past, and giving us an amusing insight into the economy with which these arrangements were carried out. It must not, however, be imagined from this that the Trinity House was stingy in providing for its guests; it was economical, and that is quite another thing. Indeed, a friendly dinner or a friendly wine-drinking concluded the majority of its meetings, for whatever cause such meeting might have been held; and there is every reason to suppose that these entertainments were thoroughly enjoyed by those present. Take, for instance, the incidental allusions which Evelyn makes to them in his Diary. But at the same time we find the Master and wardens of the Trinity House generally careful to avoid anything like unnecessary lavishness in the conduct of their feasts. Thus, in 1670 it was decided that the dinner on 'Court' days should be paid for at a rate not exceeding five shillings per head, 'excepte on extraordinary occasions.' They allowed a little more when 'outsiders' were to be entertained; and for the dinner they were going to give on Trinity-Monday 1704 at 'the *Rummer*' in Queen Street, they sanctioned the expenditure of ten shillings per head for twenty-six persons, with a proviso, that if two 'extras' came, nothing was to be charged for them.

In dining by themselves, they would doubtless have been content with more frugal fare; and six years later, when affairs were presumably not in a very flourishing state, they took their annual dinner by themselves 'for ye good husbandry of the corporation.' Even in the money-spending days of Charles II., the 'Bretheren' had considered whether, after all, it was 'desirable' to so often invite 'courtiers' to their feasts. By 'desirable' they certainly meant, did they get a *quid pro quo* for the invitation? To derive some benefit from those they fêted was indeed a golden rule with the corporation, as is evidenced in their overtures to a certain wealthy Mr Merrick. He had already been a benefactor to the corporation; and on Trinity-Monday 1669 they had 'endeavoured to get him to dinner;' but in this they failed. Those were honest days, when people did not scruple to commit to paper the true motives for their actions; and so we find the clerk of the Trinity House making a memorandum in the minute-book to show good Mr Merrick some other attention, as he was 'a single man,' and if the corporation pleased him, might leave them 'something more at death.'

A little later, they settled that a present of wine would appeal most to the wealthy bachelor's feelings, so they asked a friend of his to dinner, and learnt what wines 'Mr Merrick did usuallye drinke.' These, it came out, were claret and canary; and a few days later, the 'Bretheren' sent him eight dozen of the former, and four dozen of the latter. History does not record if such delicate attentions had the desired effect. Let us hope they did, and that the corporation did not experience the occasional ingratitude of human nature.

No details of the 'fare' served at these Trinity House feasts in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries have been preserved; but we learn from a Council order made during the time of the Commonwealth, that 'thre dyshes of good mete, and not more,' were at that time provided for dinner on ordinary occasions; and in 1660 we also find the corporation directing that 'two barrells of strong beer' should be in readiness 'for the election of the Master.' Among those who were expected to partake of the contents

were William Prynne and Serjeant Maynard. Drinking (we do not use the word to imply intemperance) formed a very important part of the ceremonial with the Trinity House on all occasions. Even when no meal was served after a meeting, we find that the 'Bretheren' 'refreshed themselves with a glasse of wine,' and then went to Deptford Church to hear a sermon. When two of the 'Bretheren' had a little disagreement, as Captain Crispe and Captain Crane had in 1671, a day was appointed for these gentlemen to attend 'and drink to each other,' and declare themselves reconciled. In 1665, the Court, finding the claret 'provided for the meetings not so pure or good as was expected,' ordered the wardens to lay in 'a tierce or twoe of such claret as might be approved of.'

There is one entry in the corporation minutes which suggests that 'courtiers' may have been inconvenient guests to entertain, for other reasons than the extra expense which their presence occasioned. Apparently, on accepting an invitation, they were in the habit, like the famous Mr Jingle, of ordering, if not actually what they would have for dinner, at least where they would have it; thus, we find the dinner on Trinity-Monday 1661 ordered to be kept at Stepney, if the Duke of Albemarle, when invited to it, 'did not order it in Water Lane.'

THE MONTH:

SCIENCE AND ARTS.

Miss Gordon Cumming, the well-known traveller, and sister to the 'Lion-slayer,' has recently published some interesting particulars regarding a successful attempt to teach the blind in China to read. It is estimated that there are more than half a million of blind persons in China, and this endeavour to afford them the solace of reading is due to the benevolence of Mr W. H. Murray. Formerly a sawyer in the south of Scotland, but more recently a colporteur of the National Bible Society, Mr Murray went in that capacity to Pekin. His system consists in the employment of embossed dots, and it is strictly phonetic, that is to say, the four thousand characters used in Chinese typography have been reduced to a comparatively few combinations of dots representing certain sounds. His first pupil was a street beggar, who learnt to read in six weeks. This experiment showed that the scheme was practicable, and in a short time afterwards a Blind School was opened in Pekin. It is worthy of remark that the scholars there learn to read with far greater rapidity than their more fortunate fellows who have the use of their eyes. Surely this fact should be a plea for that remodelling of Chinese typography which must come sooner or later.

On account of the state of the weather during the late eclipse, comparatively few observations were made. Very much disappointment has been expressed by the observers in consequence. Large sums of money have been spent on fruitless journeys and preparations; and even those observers who were provided with balloons, which it was thought would render them to a certain extent independent of lowering clouds, were unsuccessful. One balloon got wet, and was too heavy to carry up the two persons in the car; and the other was met by torrents of rain, and had speedily to descend.

Monsieur W. de Fonvielle, an experienced French aëronaut, claims that balloons can be made very serviceable to astronomical science, and indeed he was the first to advocate their use for observations. He believes that, under skilful management, observers can be safely carried above any obscuring veil of clouds; but sufficient time must be given to the necessary preparations, and the balloon must be capable of carrying a large amount of ballast. It seems to be certain that photographs taken so far above the lower strata of the atmosphere would have a much better chance of success than those taken on the surface of the earth. The total eclipse of the moon which will take place in January next will afford an opportunity, of which many will doubtless take advantage, of testing the value of balloon observation.

An attempt has lately been made at Paris by MM. Jovis and Mallet to rise to a greater height in the atmosphere by means of a balloon than has ever yet been done. The aëronauts took with them a number of instruments for the purpose of making observations, and among these were a barometer designed to measure heights of upwards of thirty thousand feet, and a thermometer which would record temperatures fifty degrees below zero. A new feature was represented by the provision of bags of oxygen, for the purpose of inhalation by the aëronauts after attaining high elevations. It will be remembered that in 1862 Messrs Glaisher and Coxwell ascended from Wolverhampton for the purpose of making scientific observations from a balloon, and that they then reached the extraordinary altitude of seven miles above the earth. On this occasion, both the occupants of the car suffered very much, Mr Glaisher becoming quite insensible for a time. A similar experience seems to have been the lot of these French experimenters, one of them having fainted twice upon reaching the altitude of twenty thousand feet, the faintness being speedily mitigated after inhalation of the oxygen provided. The ascent was successful, but the height reached was far below that attained by Mr Glaisher and his companion, as already recorded.

A new kind of smokeless gunpowder has recently formed the subject of many experiments by the War Office authorities. This powder, the composition of which is a secret, is known as the Johnson-Barland, or for short, J.-B. powder. Its inventor claims that it gives greater velocity, flatter trajectory, less recoil, and less fouling than ordinary government powder. It will keep better, is safer to manufacture and to handle, and the weight is less than that of ordinary powder. Its inventor states that he will soon be able to produce a cartridge which complete shall weigh one hundred grains less than those now in use, while its performance shall be all that can be desired. In the recent experiments with the smokeless powder, it has been clearly demonstrated that several of these claims are based upon fact. There will be divided opinions among military men as to the advisability of using smokeless powder in warfare,

for, although the smoke must interfere with correct aim, it has often proved a friendly shield, under cover of which victory has been gained or life has been saved.

Now that we have come to the end of the long drought that has afflicted more or less a large portion of the country during the past summer months, it may be as well to inquire how long a time has elapsed since a similar occurrence of such absolute drought has been recorded. Mr G. J. Symons, F.R.S., writing from an observatory at Crowborough, in Sussex, states that it is more than forty years since the late absolute drought of thirty days in this part of Sussex was equalled. Mr Symons defines an absolute drought as a period of fourteen or more days with no measurable rainfall.

In response to the appeal of the Royal Society of Victoria and the Royal Geographical Society of Australia, the Premier of Victoria has consented to place the sum of ten thousand pounds on the estimates for the purpose of Antarctic exploration. It is intended to interest shipowners in the enterprise, and masters of ships will receive special bonuses for different services in connection with it. Thus, for every hundred tuns of oil from fish caught south of a certain latitude, they will receive a sum of money. A special bonus will also be given to any master of a ship who will pass still nearer to the South Pole, and also for establishing on shore a temporary observing camp. Two ships will be required for this work, and they must be ready to start by the 15th of next October. The sum of money named above is promised on the condition that other colonies will join in this scheme, which it is hoped will give a strong impetus to Antarctic exploration.

According to recent advices, the Panama Canal scheme does not seem to be in such a flourishing position as its advocates and supporters recently endeavoured to prove. In one section of the Canal great difficulty has been experienced with the soil, which, owing to heavy rains, is constantly thrown back into the excavated channel, so that to a great extent the work already done will have to be done over again. Financially, the scheme seems also to be unsatisfactory. Up to the present time, five millions sterling have been paid as interest out of capital. It is estimated that at the present rate of progress the work will cost at least one hundred and twenty millions sterling; and the Company must earn five times the amount earned by the Suez Canal Company in order to cover their working expenses, interest, and other charges!

A paper was lately read before the China Asiatic Society by Mr Carles, lately vice-consul in Corea, giving an interesting sketch of that comparatively unknown country. He points out in this paper that, owing to the position of Corea between China and Japan, it has frequently been invaded by both countries. As a relic of one of these invasions, which occurred in the sixteenth century, there is a large mound at Katito, underneath which are buried the ears and noses of one hundred and thirty thousand Coreans. But the country is now left alone by its neighbours, and is independent. The people are said to be very peaceful, and to treat strangers well. The women are allowed to go abroad only in the evening, when all the men decorously retire indoors. The country is so primitive that the people have few wants. They have no trade; there is nothing to invest money in, and apparently Corea is a paradise for the lazy. The men are addicted to drink, but still more to the tobacco pipe, which is described as the curse of the country. The Corean goes about his occupation with a pipe three feet long in his mouth; and whatever the nature of the work may be, whether digging with a spade or any other employment, the man devotes one of his hands to his precious pipe, which he will not relinquish for a moment. The result is that fifteen men do about the work of three Europeans. It is stated that the natural features of the country are very beautiful, and that the people take a great pride in it.

A correspondent of the *Times* points out that in the recent debate upon the shot-firing clauses of the Coal Mines Bill, the speakers seemed to be unaware that a form of cartridge can be and is now used for blasting without incurring the slightest risk, and he supports his contention by publishing a letter signed by a dozen colliery managers of North Staffordshire. This letter states that blasting by means of gunpowder has been given up in many of the mines in that district for years, that now a water cartridge fitted with an electrical firing apparatus is used, and that its adoption is daily increasing, two hundred thousand shots having been fired by this system without a single accident. With regard to cost, the new method compares favourably with the use of gunpowder and the old-fashioned fuse, and the coal so obtained is in as good a condition as under the old practice. But in addition to these advantages, there is a sense of security experienced by all engaged, from the knowledge that the water in the cartridge quenches immediately the flame caused by the explosion of each charge.

While the unfortunate English farmer has to complain of the numerous insect pests to which agriculture is subject, and which, owing to the late drought, have been more marked than ever, one pest at least has been found this year to be in a minority. Few wasps have been seen, except in some places where they are still abundant. At Maiden-Erleigh a wasp's nest, after having been smoked with sulphur, was recently dug out from a stack of turf. This nest measured the extraordinary size of thirty inches in circumference, and contained thousands of wasps! Its discovery was opportune, for a prize had been offered for the finest wasp's nest, at the Cottage Garden Exhibition in the neighbourhood, and this nest took the prize without any difficulty.

The Atlantic steamship *Umbria* has gone through an experience which, luckily, is not common. In mid-Atlantic the lookout observed a huge wave approaching the ship, and the course of the vessel was immediately altered, so that it might meet the wall of water obliquely. When the ship met the wave, it caused her to tremble from stem to stern; and the rush of hundreds of tuns of water on the deck was so forcible that the thick brass rails on the bridge and the iron stanchions were twisted and broken, while the woodwork generally was crushed into splinters. Luckily, there was no loss of life; but there was a panic amongst the passengers during the critical period. It would be interesting to know

whence this abnormal wave came, and how it originated.

Dr Freire of Brazil, who has for the past seven years been trying to find a means of protection against yellow fever by inoculation, seems to have met with some success. Dr Freire works on the principle of M. Pasteur's methods—that is to say, he gets what is termed a culture liquid for the inoculation, and injects it subcutaneously. It is found that there is a mortality of about one per thousand for the inoculated, and one per cent. for those who have not been protected by the new method. In Rio de Janeiro, this year there has been no epidemic of yellow fever, a circumstance which has not occurred for the past thirty-five years; but how far this may be due to Dr Freire's system, it is impossible to state.

The introduction of liquid hydrocarbons for fuel on shipboard and to steam-boilers generally has recently made great headway. A series of experiments and tests are about to be made by Mr Thwaite, C.E., of Liverpool, and these experiments may possibly have great influence on the employment of liquid fuels in the future. The effects of air-supply, air and steam, and steam alone, will be considered, and the exact heat-value of different kinds of liquid fuel will be ascertained with precision.

In one of the Paris theatres, some new apparatus has recently been tried for the purpose of securing safety in case of fire. The apparatus is governed by an electrical circuit, which can be closed by push-buttons in various parts of the building. The act of pressing one of these buttons would be to drop the iron curtain that divides the stage from the auditorium, and at the same time to open numerous exit doors provided in case of panic. In case no one should have the presence of mind to touch one of these buttons, the heat of the fire itself will act upon certain portions of the apparatus, so that the curtain will come down and the doors will open automatically.

A new system of bootmaking has been introduced under the name of the Ab-intra Method. This word explains the method adopted; for the nails, of special make, are, by a machine, put in from the inside of the sole, so that the heads of the nails are towards the wearer's feet. This inner sole is then placed on the last with the points of the nails upwards, and the upper part of the boot is pulled over them and made fast with a special form of tool. The sole proper is then placed over the points, and is hammered down, the nails being then bent over upon the outside of the sole. It is said that the three portions of the boot are in this manner so closely united that it requires special appliances to separate them, the secret of this great amount of cohesion being in the form of nail employed. It is said that there is a great saving of time in this process.

Some months ago there was a panic in London regarding a case of wholesale poisoning by means of ice-creams, and if we remember rightly, the danger was traced to the impure water employed in making the ice. It has just been pointed out by an American doctor that the poisoning in such a case may be due to chemical action which takes place in the ice-cream freezer, and by which the zinc is dissolved. He has shown clearly, by means of a galvanometer, that an electrical current under certain conditions will pass through the utensils used, and this current indicates that zinc is dissolved from one of the containing vessels.

Mr Ranyard, the well-known astronomer, has patented a new method of making wood pavement. The system has been suggested by the surface of an elephant's tooth, which it will be remembered consists of layers of hard substance intermingled with a softer material, so that, as the surface wears down, there is always a series of hard ridges upon the surface. Mr Ranyard's system comprises the use of blocks made of alternate layers of hard and soft material, which are set upon edge, so that the edges of these laminæ constitute a wearing surface. These blocks are four inches thick, and they are made of alternate layers of Portland cement and a mixture of sand and cement. They will wear down gradually under traffic; but, unlike granite blocks, they will not wear smooth, but will continue rough, so that they can be worn down until less than one inch in thickness. This system is about to be put to rigid tests.

The *Scientific American* gives some account of a negro who is probably the oldest man now in the world. He was born in 1752, and remembers the rejoicing forty years later, when Washington was elected to the Presidency. Five years ago, when he was at the age of one hundred and thirty, he could do light work; but now he suffers from rheumatism, which prevents him walking; otherwise, he is in good health.

A German paper lately published a method of removing rust from iron, which appears to be very simple, and is said to be thoroughly effectual. It consists in immersing the article in a nearly saturated solution of chloride of tin, which, however, must not be too acid, or it will attack the iron treated. After removal from this bath, the metal must be washed in water, and then with a weak solution of ammonia. The iron so treated assumes the appearance of frosted silver, and is proof against rust.

A process has lately been discovered by which vulcanised fibre can be made sufficiently porous to be used in place of the ordinary porous jar in primary batteries. It is said that the electrical resistance of the ordinary Bunsen cell with a porous pot made of this fibre is only half as great as that of the cell in which a porcelain pot is used. It is believed that this porous fibre will be of great use for many other electrical appliances.

An interesting relic of the first London Bridge, which was erected in the time of William the Conqueror, has been dug up from the bed of the Thames in the course of some excavations which have been lately made at Botolph Wharf. This is a portion of one of the piles of the original bridge, which seems to have been oblong in section, instead of square, according to modern ideas. The wood is almost black, and is oak; but although saturated with water and blackened with its eight hundred years of immersion in mud and water, it is still fit for service, and might possibly do duty for another eight centuries.

At the Manchester Exhibition a new form of forge-hammer is exhibited. This hammer no doubt owes its conception to the well-known steam-hammer of Nasmyth, but it works by the

explosive force of gas. It will, if required, deliver one hundred and twenty blows per minute, each blow having a striking force equal to three hundredweight falling through a space of one foot.

A WEIRD PICTURE.

At the mouth of the beautiful loch which forms the harbour of Campbeltown, there stands an island called Davaar, about a mile or so in circumference. On the side facing Campbeltown Loch it slopes down to the water, but on the other sides it is precipitous. Its cliffs are indented with numerous caves, which are objects of interest and curiosity to visitors, as they are easily accessible at nearly all states of the tide to any one not afraid of a rather rough walk over boulders. In connection with one of these caves, there has, within the last few weeks, arisen an object of rather mysterious interest in the shape of a painting of the Saviour on the cross. The cave in question is a double one, the main cave being about fifteen or twenty yards in depth, with a separate smaller one opening into it about halfway in. In the recess formed by the junction of the two caves there is a curious flat triangular surface of rock exactly the size to contain the figure, with arms stretched on the cross; and it is almost a stroke of genius to conceive the painting of such a subject in such a place, as the subdued light entering by the smaller opening, dimly lighting up a recess which would otherwise be dark, gives the figure a weird and mysterious appearance, which is most striking and impressive. It is full size, painted in oil colours, and represents a full front view of the Saviour. It is a realistic work, and, so far as can be judged by the dim religious light, well and powerfully drawn and coloured. The discovery created a powerful sensation, and it has attracted an almost constant stream of visitors from all parts of Scotland. This sensation was heightened by the mystery attending it, no one knowing when or by whom the work was done. A gentleman named Mr Archibald M'Kinnon, however, has since acknowledged 'that I entered the double cave on the island of Davaar on several occasions, and painted the subject of "Christ Crucified" on the wall of the cave, in the most suitable place I have ever discovered for the purpose of portraying a subject I have long had at heart.'

ROSES.

'I HAVE roses to sell! I have roses to sell!'
The voice of the vendor grew faint as it fell.
I went to my window and threw it up high,
Because I loved roses and wanted to buy.

There were women and men speeding fast through the street,
The footways resounded with hurrying feet;
I looked to the left, and I looked to the right,
But the seller of roses was nowhere in sight.

'I have roses, sweet roses!'—I heard it again,
And a little wan form hurried by in the rain;
No friend to protect her—to shield her from harm—
No wealth save the roses that hung on her arm.

She came to my beckon, so modest and shy,
And blushed with delight when I offered to buy.
I took the best blossoms; I gave what I chose;
She knew not the value of even a rose.

'I would not take money,' she said with a tear,
'If father were well, and if mother were here.
I cannot help feeling—I 've felt it all day—
Ashamed to sell flowers that we once gave away!'

She fled, with a sigh, from my pitying sight,
And hurried away in the gloom of the night;
While I by her words was instinctively brought
To ponder the lesson unconsciously taught.

Ashamed to sell roses! and yet, day by day,
We are bartering treasures more priceless than they:
The gifts God hath given—the best we have got—
For perishing pleasures that satisfy not.

We sell our smiles to the rich of the earth,
Our favours for what we conceive they are worth,
Our talents for treasure, our nature for name,
Our wisdom for wealth, and our freedom for Fame.

We are selling and selling—and what is unsold
Is given on credit, with bond for the gold;
It is 'nothing for nothing,' give nothing away,
And count up to-morrow the gains of to-day.

Poor seller of roses! I see thee no more;
Thy fate is a secret I cannot explore;
Thy voice may be murmuring still in the night:
'I have roses to sell—I have red ones and white!'

Ashamed to sell roses! Perhaps thou art now
Where shame never flushes the glorified brow;
Perhaps thou art breathing the sweetness profound
The great Rose of Sharon dispenses around.

I know not; but, child, wheresoever thou art,
Remembrance still claims thee a place in my heart;
I think of thee often, by poverty driven,
Ashamed to sell roses thou fain wouldst have given.

O, long may I follow that yearning of thine,
To give, not to barter, the things that are mine;
And when the dark river rolls down to the sea,
The shore may be golden for me, as for thee.

NANNIE POWER O'DONOGHUE.

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